

THE FIRST ALASKANS INSTITUTE
GRANT REPORT INFORMATION COVER SHEET

FINAL REPORT

Dates covered: From April 14, 2004 To August 31, 2004

Grant Number 08-62

Name of Organization: The Ahtna Heritage Foundation

Address: P.O. Box 213, Glennallen, Alaska 99588

Name of Project: Ahtna Historical Village – Construction Phase

Project Director: Dorothy Shinn, Executive Director

Phone number: 907-822-5778

Start Date of Grant period: April 14, 2004

End Date of Grant period: August 31, 2004

Grant Amount: \$20,815.00

Purpose of Grant: To support the planning and development of the Ahtna Historical Village, a community business to interpret Ahtna Athabascan culture to Ahtna youth, to non-Native locals, and, to visitors from other places and cultures. In its development and subsequent use, the Ahtna Historical Village provides a place for Ahtna youth to learn their traditional culture from their Ahtna Elders while being employed during its construction. As a community business, the Ahtna Historical Village will provide future employment and revenues in support of other cultural enrichment programs of The Ahtna Heritage Foundation.

Report Prepared by:

Date

8/30/2004
Dorothy Shinn
Dorothy Shinn, Executive Director

Dorothy Shinn
[signature]

Telephone: 907-822-5778

**THE FIRST ALASKANS INSTITUTE
REQUEST FOR FUNDS**

Organization: The Ahtna Heritage Foundation
Address: P.O. Box 213, Glennallen, Alaska 99588

Project Title: Ahtna Historical Village – Construction Phase

Grant Number 08-62

Start Date: April 14, 2004 **End Date:** August 31, 2004

Amount Approved: \$20,815.00

Grant Funds Received to date: \$10,407.50

**Grant Funds Expended /
Encumbered to date:** \$20,815.00

**Match Requirement met
/ Committed to date:** \$32,923.00

Grant Balance: \$10,407.50

Funds requested: \$10,407.50

Report Prepared by:

8/30/04
Date

Dorothy Shinn, Executive Director

Telephone: 907-822-5778


[signature]

THE FIRST ALASKANS INSTITUTE NARRATIVE REPORT

Organization: The Ahtna Heritage Foundation
Project Title: Ahtna Historical Village – Construction Phase
Grant Number: 08-62

I. Project Information

1. As originally conceived, the Ahtna Historical Village project envisioned outcomes in cultural enrichment, local employment, community collaboration, and economic development. These outcomes were largely accomplished, as planned, by involvement in the project by Ahtna Elders and Youth, by the region's Ahtna villages and their councils, by entities of Ahtna, Incorporated, and, by other governmental and industrial entities; a wide community-based effort.
2. The project's principal accomplishments are physical, organizational and cultural in nature. As we've constructed the physical structures of the project, so too has the project built new bridges and reinforced others to and from its many participants. Historically, these important relationships, so essential to Ahtna People's survival in central Alaska's hostile environment, have been instrumental in achieving the projects goals and objectives.
3. The Ahtna Historical Village project has been conducted essentially as planned; although the continuing loss of and inability to access Ahtna Tradition-Bearers has necessitated broader travel for research purposes than originally envisioned. Similarly, the seasonal availability of natural resource materials—Spruce bark, for example, will delay completion of a planned structure until Spring 2005. These delays reinforce the significance of the Elders' description of how their ancestors' survival was dependent of harvesting resources at critical times of the year.
4. It is not surprising to The Ahtna Heritage Foundation that this project has largely been completed without surprises, even though the project's Assistant Coordinator left during its middle stages. Beyond this, the project ran a little slower than planned due to unforeseen absences of important Elders. A positive surprise was the eagerness of the participation in the project by our Ahtna youth, both for cultural and economic reasons.
5. We can only suggest that others planning similar projects recognize that the Tradition Bearers are not necessarily available on our administratively-planned schedule; as Elders, they are older and not consistently as healthy and available to us. Our project, for example, was hampered by the deaths of two significant Elders; not only did we lose the traditional knowledge they carried, but the project was slowed by the traditional Ahtna grieving process. These are things that cannot be planned for, so greater allowances must be part of our planning process.
6. The Ahtna Historical Village is a dynamic project and process; it will continue as financial and natural resources are available. A second construction phase will follow including, for example, bark harvesting, road construction, and completion of support facilities.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

As mentioned earlier, the departure of the Project's Assistant Coordinator was the only change in The Ahtna Heritage Foundation organizationally. The long-established relationships between The Ahtna Heritage Foundation and the eight Ahtna Villages assured solid commitments of resources as planned. As in most projects, greater communications always helps provide a smooth pathway, but the distances that separate these villages was not a factor in the project.

III. News clippings and photographic contact sheets are attached; edited photographs will be forwarded under separate cover.